

HOUSE BILL 2897
By Hensley

AN ACT to name a segment of U.S. Highway 43 in honor of Senator Fred Thompson.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges to honor public servants who have contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, during his eight remarkable years representing Tennessee as a member of the United States Senate, Senator Fred Thompson, a native of Lawrenceburg and Lawrence County, was a prominent and highly influential figure in the political, social, and civic lives of this state and nation, and he served his constituents well in numerous capacities, always working diligently at his elected duties and expending the necessary effort to understand the opposing sides of complex issues; and

WHEREAS, Senator Thompson's illustrious career in the United States Senate came to an end with the adjournment of the 107th U.S. Congress, as he decided not to seek re-election; and

WHEREAS, the good people of this state first evinced their great faith in the political and governmental capabilities of Fred Thompson in 1994, when they elected him to fill an unexpired term in the U.S. Senate; they reaffirmed their belief in Senator Thompson two years later by re-electing him to a full six-year term with the most votes any candidate for public office in Tennessee has ever received; and

WHEREAS, Senator Thompson was a dynamic and well informed participant in the legislative process who always voted his conscience, and he earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues and constituents alike for his outstanding contributions as a member of the powerful Senate Committee on Finance, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, the

National Security Working Group, and the prestigious Council on Foreign Affairs; and

WHEREAS, a leader among leaders, he was selected in 1997 to serve as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, making him among the most junior senators in history to chair a major Senate Committee; he served honorably in that position until June of 2001; and

WHEREAS, during his Chairmanship, Senator Thompson's committee actively pursued an agenda aimed at the laudable goal of producing a smaller, more efficient, and more accountable federal government; and

WHEREAS, a tireless proponent of progress, he was a champion for his constituents' needs, and his actions precipitated remarkable benefits for the people of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, previous to his excellent tenure in the U.S. Senate, Fred Thompson enjoyed a distinguished career in the law; and

WHEREAS, two years after graduating from the Vanderbilt University School of Law, he was named an Assistant United States Attorney and, at the age of 30, he gained national prominence when he was appointed Minority Counsel to the Senate Watergate Committee, which he served from 1973-1974; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, Senator Thompson represented a Tennessee Parole Board Chairman who had been fired under suspicious circumstances; his work on this case helped to expose a clemency scandal and led to positive reform in Tennessee government; and

WHEREAS, Senator Thompson's numerous other notable endeavors include service as Special Counsel to both the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and authoring a book of his Watergate memoirs, *At That Point in Time*; and

WHEREAS, Senator Thompson's retirement from the United States Senate has left a void that will not easily be filled, and his considerable talents and energies are already missed by both his colleagues and the good people of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Lawrenceburg and Lawrence County are justifiably proud of their native son, and have raised money to build and erect signs bearing the language "Hometown of Senator Fred Thompson" on the highways leading into Lawrenceburg; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Mayor and Commissioners of the City of Lawrenceburg has also petitioned this body to name the newly constructed segment of U.S. Highway 43 within the corporate boundaries of that fair city in honor of Senator Thompson and his many accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly most heartily concurs with this proposal to honor a remarkable public servant and even more remarkable human being; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the newly constructed segment of U.S. Highway 43 within the corporate boundaries of the City of Lawrenceburg in Lawrence County is hereby designated "Fred Thompson Boulevard" as a lasting tribute to this distinguished statesman and gifted public servant.

SECTION 2. The department of transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating the newly constructed segment of U.S. Highway 43 within the City of Lawrenceburg as "Fred Thompson Boulevard".

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.